

# Federal Prosecutors Indict 3 In 5-Year-Old Mail Robbery

BOSTON (AP) — A major break has occurred in the great Plymouth mail truck robbery with the arrest of a woman and two men in the \$1,551,277 cash haul.

The woman, mother of four children, and the two men are accused of committing with "other persons unknown" what is believed to be the largest cash robbery in the nation's history.

A federal grand jury charged the three with the 1962 robbery in indictments returned Monday—two weeks before the five-year statute of limitations runs out for the federal government to prosecute.

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Named in the indictments were Thomas R. Richards, 42, of Weymouth, an electrician for New England Power Co.; John J. Kelley, 51, of Watertown, unemployed; and Patricia Diaferio, 32, of Boston.

Richards was arrested at his home by U.S. marshals. The other two surrendered by ar-

rangements made through their attorneys.

The men, both represented by noted criminal lawyer F. Lee Bailey, were released in bail of \$25,000 set by U.S. Commissioner Francis H. Farrell. Mrs. Diaferio, represented by attorney Joseph Bailliro, was freed after posting \$5,000 bail.

The indictments charge that the three, and others unknown, robbed two postal workers of the money in Canadian and U.S. currency. It also charges them with putting the lives of postal employes in jeopardy. Conviction would carry a minimum sentence of 25 years in prison.

Two months after it occurred, about 30 U.S. marshals and post office inspectors tore Richards' \$18,000 home apart.

They ripped out ceilings and walls, pried up floor boards and took panels off outside walls and eaves. A search warrant said they sought \$1 million of the mail loot.

In the search of Richards' home, \$350 in cash was found

hidden beneath a bathroom floor, authorities said. Richards said it was gambling winnings.

The searchers said they found a shotgun and a .45-caliber pistol, two bullet-proof vests and two belts of the type worn by policemen.

A power shovel was used to dig up a cement patio Richards had built the summer of the robbery.

Kelley has accused post office inspectors of harassing him in their investigation.

Mrs. Diaferio was called before the grand jury last week.

The mail truck was enroute to the Federal Reserve Bank in Boston with shipments of cash from Cape Cod banks. As the truck entered a lonely stretch of Route 3 in Plymouth, a man in what looked like a policeman's uniform set up highway construction cones on the limited-access road, detouring traffic behind it.

Then the gang of robbers held up the truck, unobserved by any other traffic.